THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes Sir, a Seminar on the National Forestry Action Programme was organised by the Ministry of Environment and Forests at New Delhi on 20-21st March, 1995.

(b) and (c). A draft National Forestry Action Programme document has been prepared. Thrust areas identified in the document for the forestry sector, in order of national priorities, are:—

1. Protection of existing forest resources,

2. Increase of forest productivity.

3. Easing of pressure of demand of forest products.

4. Strengthening of policy and institutional framework.

5. Expansion of forest cover/area.

The draft document was discussed at the seminar. Regional level workshops will discuss the draft document further. These would be followed by inter-Ministerial consultations before finalisation.

(d) Approximately thirty nine lakh hectares of land have been afforested including in social and farm forestry under the 20 point programme during the period 1992-93 till end 1994.

Letter Sorting Machines at Airport Sorting Office in Bombay

330. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:
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ANSARI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two automatic letter sorting machines have been installed at Airport Sorting Office at Bombay;

(b) if so, what is the sorting capacity per day of each machine, the capital expenditure for installation of these two machines and recurring expenditure like maintenance, electricity, rent of space, salary of the operators etc. per year;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the capacity of these two machines is not being utilised even to the extent of 40 per cent; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps proposed to be taken to increase utilisation of the machines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The rated capacity according to the manufacturer's specifications; of the two sorting machines at the Automatic Mail Processing Centre (AMPC) Bombay is 12 lakh letter mail articles daily. The present work design at the Centre provides optimum capacity of 9 lakh articles of letter mail daily. This design is based on the duty span of officials and the various requirements of machine maintenance and programme capability.

The total expenditure incurred on the installation of the 2 machines incuding 6 advanced compact coding suites and 2 bundling machines was Rs. 18.6 crore inclusive of Rs. 2 crore which was paid as Custom Duty. This apart, civil and electrical works together cost Rs. 2.5 crore.

The annual expenditure at the Automatic Mail Processing Centre, Bombay for the year 1994-95 is as follows:

(i) Machine Maintence charges — Rs. 12 Lakh
(ii) Electricity Charges — Rs. 18 lakh
(iii) Establishment Charges — Rs. 70 lakh
(iv) Other costs (Consumables including custom duty of Rs. 57 Lakh, Rs. 16 Lakh.

The AMPC is housed in a departmental building and; therefore; there is no rental.

(c) The machine has been utilised upto about 4.89 lakh articles per day which is 54.3 per cent of the operating capacity.

(d) At present a substantial proportion of letter mail cannot be handled by the automatic sorting machines because of various factors like their shape. size, content, etc. In order to make a larger proportion of letter mail amenable to machine handling, the following steps have been taken:

(i) Postcards and Inland Letter Cards which were hitherto non-machinable, have been redesigned to suit the requirements of mechanised sorting.

(ii) Envelopes have been standardized by statutory rule to make them machinable to a greater extent than hither to.

(iii) Use of standardised envelopes is being popularised by publicity and contacts with users.

(iv) Collection and preliminary processing practices like segregation of machinable and non-machinable mail are constantly reviewed and modified as found necessary.

Computerised reservation facility in Ajmer Division

*331. SHRI KANAK MAL KATARA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of raiway stations in Ajmer Division of Western Railway where computerised reservation is available;

(b) the names of stations where this facility is not available;

(c) the reasons for not providing computerised reservation facility at Udaipur railway station; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to extend this facility at Udaipur and other Railway stations?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) and (b) Six stations namely, Ajmer, Abu Road, Gandhidham, New Bhuj, Falna and Udaipur have been provided with computerised reservation facilities on Ajmer Division of Western Railway. The remaining stations do not have this facility.

(c) and (d) Computerised reservation facilities have been provided at Udaipur station and became operational from 27.3.95. There is no proposal to provide this facility at any other station on Ajmer Division at present.

Opening of New LPG Agencies in Uttar Pradesh

*332. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG agencies in Uttar Pradesh at present;

(b) the present position of supply and demand of LPG in the State;

(c) whether any requests for opening of new LPG agencies have been received from Uttar Pradesh, particularly from hill districts of the State; and

(d) if so, by when the agencies are likely to be opened?

THE MNISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) As on 1.1.1995, there were 515 LPG distributorships operating in Uttar Pradesh.

(b) The average monthly demand of LPG in Uttar Pradesh is 33724 MTs. which is normally being met in full by the Industry. However, there has been a marginal shortfall in supply during the months of February-March, 1995 due to transportation problems, product availability constraints at some of the bottling plants of BPCL and non-availability of 'C Forms due to State Government employees strike. Action has been taken